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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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18 JUL 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (SECRET): "Some Problems of
Organizing and Conducting Intelligence
Collection in the Initial Period of a War",
by Lieutenant-Colonel B. Yefimov

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Richard Helms

Richard Helms
Deputy Director (Plans)

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Enclosure

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Original: The Director of Central Intelligence

cc: The Director of Intelligence and Research,
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The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

The Director for Intelligence,
The Joint Staff

The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence,
Department of the Army

The Director of Naval Intelligence
Department of the Navy

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence
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The Director, National Security Agency

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COUNTRY : USSR

SUBJECT : MILITARY THOUGHT (SECRET): "Some Problems of Organizing and Conducting Intelligence Collection in the Initial Period of a War", by Lieutenant-Colonel B. Yefimov

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Following is a verbatim translation of an article entitled "Some Problems of Organizing and Conducting Intelligence Collection in the Initial Period of a War", by Lieutenant-Colonel B. Yefimov. This article appeared in Issue 6 (61) of 1961 of a special version of the Soviet journal Military Thought which is classified SECRET by the Soviets and is published irregularly.

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Comment: Military Thought is published by the USSR Ministry of Defense in three versions, classified RESTRICTED, SECRET, and TOP SECRET. The RESTRICTED version has been issued monthly since 1937, while the other two versions are issued irregularly. The TOP SECRET version was initiated in early 1960. By the end of 1961, 61 issues of the SECRET version had been published, 6 of them during 1961.

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The word "razvedka" has been translated as "intelligence", "intelligence collection", and "reconnaissance", according to the context.

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Some Problems of Organizing and Conducting Intelligence

Collection in the Initial Period of a War

(Review of Military-Scientific Studies of Military
Districts and Groups of Troops)

by

Lieutenant-Colonel B. Yefimov

The successful conduct of operations in the initial period of a war depends directly on how effectively the nuclear/missile weapons have been employed, because they are the main and decisive means to destroy an enemy. In the successful use of these weapons, intelligence plays an exceptionally important part, and must be able to supply authentic and exhaustive information as to the situation, grouping, nature of operations, and intentions of the enemy, and primarily, on the objectives for nuclear/missile strikes.

Thus, if one considers that the achievement of victory in battle, in an operation, and in a war as a whole, depends first of all on the results attained by nuclear/missile weapons, then their effective employment can be attained only through intelligence of good quality.

This is why at the present time such great attention is given to the study of problems of organizing and conducting intelligence collection, particularly in the operations in the initial period of a war.

In the unpublished studies and reports of a number of military districts (groups of troops) carried out according to the plan for military-scientific studies for ground troops for 1960, on the basis of the experience of operational exercises, the problems of organizing and conducting intelligence collection with the forces and means of a border military district (front) in the


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preparation for and during the conduct of the first operations of the initial period of the war have been examined. Of special interest are the studies prepared by the generals and intelligence officers of the headquarters of the Transcaucasus, Carpathian and Belorussian Military Districts.

The recommendations contained in them deserve the greatest attention, and can be utilized for further development of the theory of intelligence collection and in practical activity. In connection with this, the present survey will reflect mainly the contents of the military-scientific studies of the above-mentioned districts.

Organization of intelligence activity. In the studies examined, it is quite correctly stated that the successful conduct of intelligence collection for the preparation and implementation of the first operations in the initial period of a war will depend in many ways on the measures carried out in peacetime, especially on the thorough study of the enemy and the theaters of military operations. It is stressed (Carpathian Military District) that the command and staff of a border military district must possess sufficient information on the disposition, grouping, and state of the troops of the probable enemy, and particularly on his nuclear/missile weapons and other means of mass destruction on the main strategic and operational axes of the theater of military operations. It is essential to accumulate, verify, and supplement these data continuously, because this will be the basis for evaluating the state of the enemy armed forces, determining their combat readiness, and planning the first operations.

Based on the experience of their practical work, the authors consider it advisable, even in peacetime, to have at the headquarters of the district detailed large-scale maps of the location of means of delivery, assembly bases, and storage depots for nuclear warheads, disposition areas of control and guidance systems for guided missiles and pilotless weapons, maps with locations of ground troops and their headquarters, air forces bases and airfields, radar and radio-navigation systems, and other


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important objectives subject to immediate destruction by nuclear weapons when delivering the first strike. Besides the above-mentioned maps, card indices and files must be built up on all these objectives at the headquarters of border military districts, in which their nature is fully described, including accurate geodetic coordinates.

While agreeing with the views of the authors on this problem, we also consider that in peacetime it is essential to keep a thorough and vigilant watch on the direction of the operational and battle preparation of the probable enemy, on his views as to the possible nature of the outbreak of war and the conduct of combat operations, as well as on his possible alternative deployment and employment of new combat weapons, especially of those troops which can be employed in the first operations of the initial period of a war. In his book "Some Problems of the Preparation and Conduct of a Front Offensive Operation in the Initial Period of a War"¹, Marshal of the Soviet Union M. V. Zakharov deals with this in particular and also with the study of the enemy and of the theaters of military operations in general.

In many studies it is pointed out that whatever weapons of armed combat the enemy possesses and however much he strives for a surprise attack, he will be required nevertheless, to carry out a whole series of measures connected with the immediate preparation to deliver a strike. We think one cannot disagree with this.

Of course, a relative degree of surprise in delivering the first strike can be achieved by the employment of missiles and of strategic and carrier aviation. It is, however, difficult to suppose that immediately before a war there will be no signs to indicate the preparation of these weapons and all the types of armed forces available in the theater of military operations for conducting

1. Marshal of the Soviet Union M. V. Zakharov, "Some Problems of the Preparation and Conduct of a Front Offensive Operation in the Initial Period of a War", Voenizdat, 1961, page 52.

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combat operations. So, for example, in carrying out his immediate preparation for attack, the enemy will be moving up troops from their permanent locations, dispersing and deploying them for the subsequent conduct of combat operations, as well as moving them away from our possible nuclear strikes.

Obviously, in order to discover in good time the measures being carried out by the enemy before the outbreak of a war, our intelligence collection, and especially strategic and certain forms of operational intelligence collection (agent, aerial, radio, and radio-technical) of the border military districts (groups of troops) must be at the highest state of combat readiness. For this purpose, as is pointed out in the military-scientific studies of the Transcaucasus Military District, the forces and means of operational intelligence of a border military district must be maintained, even in peacetime, as near as possible at wartime TO&E.

In the studies examined, much attention was given to the organization of intelligence collection within limited time periods and to the deployment of forces and means of operational and tactical intelligence collection. Successful implementation of these measures is possible if the command and staff of a border military district (group of troops) work out in good time the measures for increasing the combat readiness of the intelligence forces and means and plan to support the preparation and conduct of the first offensive operation of the initial period of a war.

If one tries to summarize all the recommendations, one finds that, with the existence of a threatening period, the main intelligence measures carried out by the command and staff of a border military district (front) must be the redeployment of the intelligence units and subunits to previously prepared disposition areas (to positions, airfields); to inform immediately those concerned of their intelligence tasks, and plan the use of the intelligence forces and means to conform with their capabilities and the situation; organize reliable communications with intelligence units (subunits, individuals) and the

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intelligence chiefs of the subordinated and collaborating formations and large units; to gather rapidly and process intelligence information, and pass it to the command and General Staff as well as all other interested levels; to complete the mobilization of intelligence forces and means as laid down by the appropriate plan and wartime TO&E.

Intelligence plan. All the above-mentioned measures must form a component part of the intelligence plan, in which, at the same time, it is essential to state clearly the intelligence tasks, areas (axes), and objectives for all intelligence forces and means subordinated to the front (army), as well as the areas and axes on which it is intended to concentrate the main efforts.

Besides this, the intelligence plan must provide: the conduct of intelligence, taking into account the scope of the first and subsequent operations, with the concentration of effort along the main operational axes and primarily of objectives and areas located within the range of the nuclear/missile weapons of the front and the armies. The plan must be elaborated and supplemented not less than once a day, especially in the period immediately prior to a war or during the so-called threatening period which is characterized by its increasing tension, discovery of new tasks, objectives, and areas for intelligence collection (Carpathian Military District).

In connection with the methods of working out and drawing up of the intelligence collection plan, two opinions are given. Certain comrades (Transcaucasus Military District, Southern Group of Troops) suggest the working out of a written intelligence plan. Such a document can give all the intelligence collection tasks in more detail, definitely specifying those concerned and the time periods for carrying out the tasks, etc. It is suggested that the written plan should have an attached map with the enemy grouping and with the main intelligence collection measures. The Carpathian Military District considers it more advisable to work out the intelligence plan graphically on the map.


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In our opinion, the methods of working out and drawing up the intelligence plan may be of different kinds. However, the suggestions made on this problem by the Transcaucasus Military District and the Southern Group of Troops are the soundest. They are also confirmed by the experience of a whole series of exercises.

Conduct of intelligence collection. In many of the studies, it is pointed out that during the period immediately prior to a war, intelligence collection carried out by the forces and means of a border military district (front) before the commencement of combat operations must be first of all through agents, by radio and radio-technical means, by reconnaissance aircraft (flights along the national boundary), by unit observation from its own territory, from ground observation posts (NP), and helicopters, as well as by the intelligence forces and means of the border troops. All other intelligence forces and means, and especially army and divisional ones, are constantly in combat readiness, but take an active part only when combat operations begin.

Appraising the capabilities of various types of intelligence collection, their employment in the period immediately prior to a war, and during an operation, the authors of the studies quite correctly point out that intelligence collection on the eve of a war must be conducted first of all to deliver the first nuclear/missile strikes effectively.

As a result of this, the efforts of intelligence during this period must be directed to additional intelligence collection on previously revealed objectives and collection on new enemy objectives, among which it is essential to include, above all, missile units in their waiting and siting areas, large units and units of the ground troops in their areas of concentration, airfields for bombers and reconnaissance aircraft, control points for troops and weapons, and other important objectives.

In the period immediately prior to a war, intelligence collection by agents will probably be about the only


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intelligence collection means of a border military district (front) which carries out tasks directly on enemy territory. Therefore, those who stress that the success of intelligence collection by agents in operations during the initial period of a war will greatly depend on the work done in peacetime are quite right (Belorussian and Carpathian Military Districts).

The organization of the agent network of a district (group of troops) must be done in such a way that it assures, firstly, timely warning to the command of the district (group of troops) of immediate enemy preparation for unleashing a war; secondly, obtain the necessary data on enemy objectives against which it would be possible to use nuclear/missile weapons in order to frustrate the first enemy strike; thirdly, obtain information necessary for the command of a district (group of troops) to accomplish successful defeat of the enemy during offensive operations.

Accordingly, it is considered that intelligence collection by agents of a border district (group of troops) must be conducted to a great depth, taking into account the scope of the initial and subsequent offensive operations; i.e., to a depth of 1000 km and more. One cannot disagree with this, because under conditions when a war has already started, with the high tempos of troop operations, and with rapid development of the initial operation into subsequent ones, great difficulties will be encountered in increasing the depth of intelligence collection by agents.

As for the number of agent points (agenturnaya tochka) in enemy territory, the view of the authors of several studies is that it must depend on the importance of the theater of military operations, its equipment, size, and the possible nature of troop operations. However, the number of operating agent points in all cases must be sufficient to ensure continuous and reliable conduct of intelligence collection before the outbreak, as well as in the first days, of a war.


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The organization of intelligence subunits and their technical equipping. Examining the possibilities of using existing intelligence forces and means, many of the studies stress that their organizational structure and technical equipment lag behind the development of modern weapons of armed combat. There is an extreme necessity to increase the capabilities of the intelligence forces and means of the combined-arms army and motorized rifle (tank) division. In connection with this, the comrades from the Transcaucasus Military District, the Southern Group of Troops, and some others advance several suggestions on the complement and technical equipment of intelligence elements at various levels.

According to their view, in a combined-arms army of a border military district it is necessary to have the following: a mixed reconnaissance aviation regiment composed of a squadron of pilotless reconnaissance means (16 units - yedinitsa), a squadron of reconnaissance aircraft (16 planes), and a squadron of transport aircraft and helicopters (10 units); a battalion for reconnaissance in depth consisting of three reconnaissance companies and a signal company; and a battalion for radio reconnaissance composed of four reconnaissance companies. It is suggested that a motorized rifle (tank) division should have an independent reconnaissance battalion composed of a company of armored personnel carriers (BRDM), a company for reconnaissance in depth, and a company for radio-technical reconnaissance. Intelligence units and subunits must be equipped with various electronic equipment, television, and equipment for accelerated processing of aerial photographs.

It should be stressed that the recommendations as to the complement and technical equipment of intelligence elements presented in the studies by the officers of these districts deserve the greatest attention and can serve as a basis in work for the creation of modern and efficient intelligence forces and means and their introduction into the forces as soon as possible.


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Some recommendations on control. A considerable part of military-scientific studies is taken up with the exposition of views on the problems of intelligence control, collection, processing, and analysis of intelligence data. This is well understood. In modern operations and combat, the struggle to gain time in this respect acquires exceptionally important significance.

Now, as never before, one must rapidly and effectively control intelligence forces and means, be able to receive a continuous flow of intelligence data, complete their evaluation in the shortest time, pass them on to the command, and inform all other interested levels about them.

The smallest delay in the gathering and processing of intelligence data can jeopardize making a decision as to the use of appropriate combat weapons, especially of nuclear/missile weapons, against important enemy objectives which have been located.

For the successful performance of these tasks, the Transcaucasus Military District suggests reorganization of the intelligence directorate of the front headquarters by creating within it an intelligence control point. The implementation of this measure, and at the same time, high technical-military preparedness of each intelligence officer, will permit an increase in efficiency of control of intelligence elements and will ensure that the command is supplied with the essential intelligence data in time. The organization of an intelligence control point of a front will be the first step toward the automation of collecting and processing intelligence data and control of intelligence elements.

The personnel of an intelligence control point must include combined-arms intelligence officers and specialist-officers of every type of intelligence. The number of personnel of a control point must be calculated to provide 24-hour service with three shifts and for two locations, in order to ensure continuity of work during movements.

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The intelligence control point of a front must have a stable multichannel communications system with secure equipment with all intelligence elements of the front, with the intelligence departments of the headquarters of the armies, with neighboring elements, with the front command, and with commanding officers of arms of troops and services.

Besides reliable high-speed radio communications equipment with secure devices, the intelligence control point must be equipped with television for pictorial transmission of intelligence data, as well as with selector communications (selektornaya svyaz) with the commander of the troops, chief of staff, operations directorate, headquarters of missile troops and artillery, intelligence department of air army headquarters, and the commander of antiair defense (PVO) troops.

The technical equipment of the control point must ensure automatic and rapid fixing on the plotting board (planshet) of the position of all intelligence forces and means of the front and the intelligence information being obtained, and after its evaluation, the immediate dispatch of a report to the command and, simultaneously, to all interested levels. It is essential to mount this technical equipment on fast-moving vehicles with high pass-ability.

In examining the suggestions on the organization and conduct of intelligence collection for effective use of nuclear/missile weapons, it should be stressed that in many of the studies it is pointed out, that, at best, intelligence collection must assure missile units the necessary description and accurate coordinates of important enemy objectives which have been located. But it is not disclosed what is meant by the description of an objective, how accurate should be the determination of coordinates, and by which most expedient methods and means of intelligence collection this accuracy could be attained.


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One must keep in mind that at the present time the coordinates (of the center of location) of such objectives as atomic artillery, units and subunits of guided missiles and free rockets in the areas of concentration and at the firing positions (launch sites, depots of nuclear weapons, command posts, and similar places) must be determined with an accuracy of up to 100 to 200 meters. Coordinates of larger objectives, such as troops in concentration areas and airfields, must be determined with an accuracy of up to 200 to 300 meters.

Without a doubt, this problem is a difficult one, but all intelligence forces and means must be able to perform it, particularly reconnaissance and reconnaissance-artillery spotter aviation and reconnaissance groups for reconnaissance in depth. Therefore, it is essential to give special attention to this problem in military-scientific studies and in practice.

The organization and conduct of aerial reconnaissance under conditions of powerful enemy antiair defense also merit further serious study. Taking into account the special complexity of overcoming enemy antiair defense at the present time, we must proceed from the assumption that aerial reconnaissance with the commencement of military operations, particularly in the first few hours of a war, must be a thoroughly planned operation, an aerial reconnaissance operation, employing all measures for the safety of the reconnaissance aircraft, and carried out according to the unified concept and plan of the command and staff of the air army.

Unfortunately, this problem was not duly reflected in the military-scientific studies.

It would also be desirable when presenting views on the organization and conduct of intelligence collection to consider the effect of radioactive contamination of large areas of terrain, because this contamination will be very typical for the first few days of a war. Obviously, the existence of zones with high levels of radiation will cause substantial changes in the nature of troop operations


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and, consequently, in the organization and conduct of intelligence collection.

In conclusion, it is essential to note once more that the military-scientific studies and lectures worked out in the military districts (groups of troops) on the problems of organizing and conducting intelligence collection in the operations of the initial period of a war, have great theoretical and practical significance. Further work in this direction will help in working out the most advisable views on the employment of intelligence forces and means of border military districts (groups of troops) in the period immediately prior to a war, as well as during the first operations of the initial period of a war.

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